

from all States, under the orders of a Commander in Chief we cannot vote for.

For decades, my predecessors and I, lacking a vote on this House floor, have had to plead, with no proportional delegation, against bureaucracy and against both open and tacit discrimination in Federal programs and funding.

Puerto Ricans have been a part of the great American family for over 120 years. Puerto Ricans are part of what makes the United States what it is today. At work, schools, law, business, sports, government, and in communities in every State we contribute to the greatness of this Nation, and we are proud of that, Mr. Speaker.

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We embrace being Americans, and we want to be looked at and treated as such by our own government system.

It is time to get to work to give the people of Puerto Rico the equality that has been long promised but denied. After the discovery of the island, there were more than 100 years as a colony of Spain and now as a colony of the United States.

This is the time. Let's do it. Respect the will of the people of Puerto Rico to become a State, and let's do it now.

#### RECOGNIZING LANE LOFTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and sincere gratitude that I rise today to recognize Lane Lofton.

A Mississippi native, Lane grew up in the South with his parents, Lynne and Bill Lofton, and his brother and sister, Will and Lydia Lofton. Not ready to part with his Southern roots quite yet, he attended Samford University in Alabama, where he began his life in politics.

Lane moved from the Alabama district operations for House Representative Bobby Bright to D.C. in 2009. It was probably the best move ever because it was in Washington that Lane met and married the love of his life, Anna York Lofton. They both have immense love for their two French bulldogs, Duey and Shirley.

After nearly a decade of service in government relations, Lane interviewed to be my chief of staff about 2 years ago. I remember it like it was yesterday. It was at the end of a very long day of orientation, and he was the last interview of the day. I remember saying to myself after he left that we must have saved the best for last. Either that or it was a long day and I was overly tired and easily impressed, although I firmly believe that it was the former.

The fact is that there is no one else I would rather have by my side over these last 2 whirlwind years than Lane Lofton.

Together, we entered the 116th Congress with the Nation's longest government shutdown and ended it with a global public health and economic crisis. But no matter the problems at hand, Lane worked diligently every single day to support our office as we passed landmark legislation, fostered relationships across the aisle, and then sometimes he just reminded me to fix my tie.

A tried and true public servant, Lane has always put the needs of others first, especially the 20-person office that he managed. That team can attest that, every single day, even when Lane had a bad day, he never showed it. He came to work every day with an ear to listen, a voice of reason, and a smile on his face. He sets an incredible example of selflessness in the work that he takes on, and he has been an invaluable mentor for our younger staffers.

I look forward to watching the future successes that Lane will find in his personal and professional life. I think that his next challenge will be one of his biggest because Lane and his wife, Anna, will welcome their first son in February. I could not be more excited to watch their young family grow.

Welcome to the No Sleep Club, Lane, and welcome to finding a level of love and devotion that you did not know you were capable of.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for your service to the Lowcountry and for becoming a lifelong friend.

#### COMMENDING CORONAVIRUS TASK FORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of the Coronavirus Task Force, appointed by President Trump and led by my brother, Vice President MIKE PENCE.

Vice President MIKE PENCE has led doctors, scientists, manufacturers, elected leaders, and others as they work hard to develop therapeutics and deliver hope for the American people.

Under the leadership of Vice President PENCE and medical experts, Operation Warp Speed has been a historic success. We now have two vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna at 90 and 95 percent effectiveness. Companies like Lilly have developed an effective antibody.

Our scientists are making history. To not recognize this achievement is an insult to the tens of thousands of people who have been working day and night to battle this pandemic.

COVID-19 has gripped our Nation and our world, but under the leadership of President Trump and Vice President PENCE, and the hard work of those on the front lines, we are on the path to recovery.

God bless those who have dedicated so much of their time and energy to helping their fellow man.

#### HONORING K-9 OFFICER DIESEL

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a fallen K-9 officer in my hometown of Columbus, Indiana.

Bartholomew County's own K-9 officer Diesel died in the line of duty this weekend while he was in pursuit of a dangerous criminal.

Diesel helped our Columbus officers find dangerous narcotics and search for suspects who had fled from the police. This is important work.

Our community has come together to express condolences for this hero with flowers, notes, and even toys on the K-9 handler's car at the sheriff's office.

Our law enforcement community is the thin blue line that protects our friends and loved ones from danger, and we are forever grateful to the heroes who sacrifice everything to ensure our safety.

#### THANKING INDIANA'S SIXTH DISTRICT

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my appreciation to the Hoosiers of Indiana's Sixth District. They have sent me to Washington again to represent them in Congress. It is an honor to be entrusted with this responsibility.

In my first term, my team and I focused on delivering quality constituent services, and we will continue to work hard for you in the next term.

The Sixth District of Indiana is my home and always will be, and it is my honor to serve you in Congress and bring Hoosier values to this Nation's capital.

#### CONGRATULATING RYOBI DIE CASTING USA

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ryobi Die Casting USA of Shelbyville, Indiana, on being named the General Motors Supplier of the Year.

The Supplier of the Year award is chosen by a global team of GM purchasing, engineering, quality, manufacturing, and logistics executives.

Hoosier manufacturing plays a major role in our local economy as well as the global economy, and Hoosiers rely on the manufacturing industry for good-paying jobs in my district.

Congratulations to Ryobi Die Casting USA for this tremendous achievement, and keep up the good work.

#### COMMEMORATING 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF NINESTAR CONNECT

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 125th anniversary of NineStar Connect.

In 1895, Loren Helms of McCordsville, Indiana, established the very first telephone in the community and created the company we know today as NineStar Connect.

With headquarters in the Sixth District, NineStar provides rural broadband to communities all over my Hoosier State.

It is my pleasure to recognize this Greenfield-based company for their contributions to our community. Thank you to the great team at NineStar, and congratulations on 125 years.